

KOCH
JAZZ

Trudy Resmond



Make Me Rainbows

MAKE ME RAINBOWS

Trudy Desmond



Make Me Rainbows does just that, painting fourteen colorful pictures, ranging from the euphoric to the baunting. Here is a set for all seasons, of unsurpassed swing and soulfulness.—Will Friedwald, author, *Jazz Singers*



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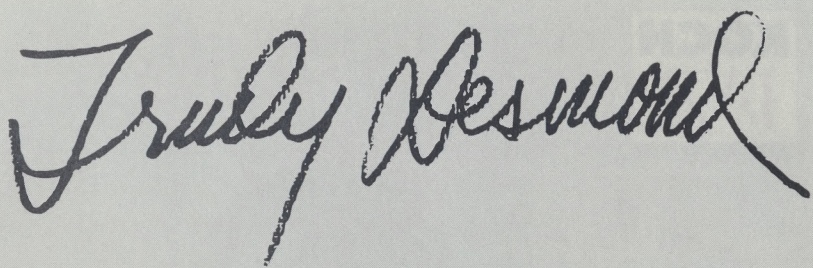
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|---|--------|---|--------|
| 1. Make Me Rainbows | (4:15) | 8. I've Got You Under My Skin/
Easy To Love | (3:30) |
| Bill Charlap, <i>piano</i> ; Neil Swainson, <i>bass</i> ;
Terry Clarke, <i>drums</i> | | Ed Bickert, <i>guitar</i> ; Neil Swainson, <i>bass</i> ;
Terry Clarke, <i>drums</i> | |
| 2. You'd Better Love Me | (3:36) | 9. Falling In Love With Love | (3:20) |
| Bill Charlap, <i>piano</i> ; Neil Swainson, <i>bass</i> ;
Terry Clarke, <i>drums</i> ; Don Thompson, <i>vibraphone</i> | | Don Thompson, <i>vibraphone</i> ; Bill Charlap, <i>piano</i> ;
Neil Swainson, <i>bass</i> ; Terry Clarke, <i>drums</i> | |
| 3. Gypsy In My Soul | (5:18) | 10. You Don't Know Me | (4:27) |
| Mike Renzi, <i>piano</i> ; Marc Johnson, <i>bass</i> ;
Joe La Barbera, <i>drums</i> ; Jay Berliner, <i>rhythm guitar</i> ;
Jim Saporito, <i>percussion</i> | | Mike Renzi, <i>piano</i> ; Marc Johnson, <i>bass</i> ;
Joe La Barbera, <i>drums</i> ; Peter Bernstein, <i>guitar</i> | |
| 4. I Have Dreamed | (3:44) | 11. Too Close For Comfort | (5:45) |
| Don Thompson, <i>piano</i> ; Ed Bickert, <i>guitar</i> ; Neil
Swainson, <i>bass</i> ; Terry Clarke, <i>drums</i> ; <i>string quartet</i> * | | Don Thompson, <i>piano/percussion</i> ; Neil Swainson,
<i>bass</i> ; Terry Clarke, <i>drums</i> ; Rick Wilkens, <i>tenor sax</i> ;
Reg Schwager, <i>rhythm guitar</i> | |
| 5. You're The Top | (4:22) | 12. Inchworm | (2:30) |
| Reg Schwager, <i>guitar</i> ; Neil Swainson, <i>bass</i> ;
Terry Clark, <i>drums</i> ; Don Thompson, <i>piano</i> ;
Rick Wilkens, <i>tenor sax</i> | | Don Thompson, <i>piano</i> ; Ed Bickert, <i>guitar</i> ;
Neil Swainson, <i>bass</i> ; <i>'cello & viola</i> * | |
| 6. The Best Thing For You | (4:14) | 13. Something's Coming | (3:04) |
| Reg Schwager, <i>guitar</i> ; Neil Swainson, <i>bass</i> ;
Terry Clarke, <i>drums</i> ; Don Thompson, <i>piano</i> | | Bill Charlap, <i>piano</i> ; Neil Swainson, <i>bass</i> ;
Terry Clarke, <i>drums</i> ; <i>string quartet</i> * | |
| 7. Whistling Away The Dark | (4:10) | 14. Sometimes | (1:00) |
| Ed Bickert, <i>acoustic guitar</i> ; Tom Szeszesniak, <i>accordion</i> ;
Don Thompson, <i>piano</i> ; Neil Swainson, <i>bass</i> ;
Terry Clarke, <i>drums</i> ; <i>string quartet</i> * | | Bill Charlap, <i>piano</i> | |

* *String Quartet*—Adele Armin, *first violin*; Vera Tarnowsky, *second violin*; Terry Helmer, *viola*; Richard Armin, *'cello*





Now I don't think I'm saying anything original or new," Trudy Desmond says of *Make Me Rainbows*, "but I think that there are certain kinds of singing that are so jazz-influenced that you can just get caught in licks and hooks and tricks. When you do that, you tend to get away from the most important aspect of singing, namely the lyric.

"It's been said a million times, but as far as I'm concerned, the singer is really so fortunate to have the lyrics to work with. I don't like to use the words merely as a vehicle to bend notes just for the sake of making 'jazz sounds,' I want the lyrics to really mean something."

It may have been said a "million times," but it's a point that can't be overstated. The challenge that Desmond sets up for herself is to start with these time-tested tunes and find something interesting and fresh to do with them, without detouring into the pitfalls of meaninglessly distorting the material just for

want of something better to do.

The set's opener and titular tune, "Make Me Rainbows," offers evidence as to how well she's succeeded. I doubt that Desmond herself, eloquent as she is, could verbally describe her approach here: rather than deserting the melody, Desmond seems to be singing rings around it, skating about its edges. She finds a million new things to do with, rather than without, the tune as written. In fact, throughout the album she does a little bit of everything, except anything you might have heard before.

Desmond and many of the current generation of singers tend to shy away from the term "jazz," because to those of us who were first exposed to the music in the '70s (whether we became performers or listeners), "jazz singing" tended to mean excessive scating and often self-indulgent improvisation. Yet since then, we've all grown up to realize that jazz doesn't necessarily entail abstraction for its own sake,

it means approaching songs of substance with two elements: a swinging sense of jazz rhythm and a unique, individual outlook.

That Trudy Desmond swings can be proved by any track. To me, this is best illustrated by "You Better Love Me" (a High Spirits show-tune unfortunately unsung since the glory years of Jack Jones), particularly in the second chorus, wherein Desmond rushes and ritards in the most unexpected places.

Any random cut will similarly support the second claim. Working with arranger Don Thompson and co-producer Barry Kleinbort, Desmond has created an album where all fourteen songs are of a piece, yet each is, as she says, its "own little entity." This happened in the best possible way, because, "without consciously trying to do that, it happened because we used whatever felt right for each tune."

Thus "Too Close for Comfort," a Mr. Wonderful hit done to death by jazz singers in the '50s, gets treated to a bossa nova makeover with a sparkling tenor solo by Rick Wilkens. And the ballads bewitch as much as the blasters. Frank Loesser's "Inch Worm," most famously jazzed by John Coltrane, challenges the singer to invoke a child-like sense of wonder and optimistic anticipation, without childishly talking down to one's audience. Armed with a thoughtfully-conceived *a capella* introduction, Desmond pulls it off.

"Gypsy in My Soul," normally done as a wild uptempo, is here spiced with a note of

Bill Evans-like introspection (reinforced by the great pianist's former bassist Marc Johnson and drummer Joe LaBarbera). "I wanted to make it moodier than usual," says Desmond, "for me the subtext is that she's not so sure that she wants to be on her own. It takes it into a whole other place."

The presence of Johnson and LaBarbera (who had just come off a decade-plus engagement with Tony Bennett at the time of this recording) underscores the extraordinary nature of the cast of supporting players accompanying Desmond. After a first glance at the list of sidemen, you'd conclude that she's assembled some of the strongest, most sensitive and swinging players working today. Yet she didn't merely hire them out of the union book—they all have long professional histories with her, most revolving around the many years she spent in Toronto's busy jazz scene. She first encountered Don Thompson and Terry Clarke in a Canadian band she describes as a "rock gospel" outfit; through Thompson she met his fellow George Shearing bassist Neil Swainson and through Clarke she worked with the remarkable accompanist Bill Charlap. Rick Wilkens and Ed Bickert (formerly with Paul Desmond—no relation to Trudy) are best known for their work with Rob McConnell's Boss Brass; even the internationally famous Mike Renzi and LaBarbera share a Canadian connection (the pianist used to live there, the bassist's brother still does).

Desmond sustains our attention with as elementary a factor as her repertory choices, such as evoking a sense of mystery with the verse to "I Have Dreamed" (rarely if ever heard outside of *The King and I*). She achieves the same results in the very fact of her doing "Whistling Away the Dark" as wonderfully as it was written (without finding a false need to impose some sort of rewrite upon Mancini and Mercer's work). Although overshadowed by the team's two consecutive Oscar-winners, this haunting, minor-key waltz is easily the most enticingly evocative tune they ever wrote. Supported by a remarkable accordion and strings backdrop, Desmond keeps our spirits soaring.

In all, *Make Me Rainbows* does just that, painting fourteen colorful pictures, ranging from the euphoric to the haunting. Here is a set for all seasons, of unsurpassed swing and soulfulness.

"A lot of times people will say to me that there is something that I've sung that perfectly expresses what they were feeling themselves," Desmond concludes. "That's the best compliment you can get: when you touch something in someone else based upon what you're singing. That's where you get back to the basic idea that this is the universal language."

— Will Friedwald
author **Jazz Singing** (1992, Collier Books)

I dedicate this CD, in loving memory, to my father Ray Salwen, who "opened my ears" to the great music played on WNEW Radio. His alarm clock was always set to that station and I went off to school humming the music of singers such as Sinatra, Kay Starr, Jeri Southern, Nat King Cole and so many of the wonderful big bands of the time. All my love and thanks, dad, for such a great start!

Thanks to all these incredible musicians for their great talent, patience and humor. Special thanks to Don Thompson, Phil Sheridan, John Snyder, Terry Sheard and last but not least, Barry Kleinbort, who truly kept me "on track."

Make Me Rainbows

- 1. Make Me Rainbows**—Bill Charlap, *piano*; Neil Swainson, *bass*; Terry Clarke, *drums* (Marilyn and Alan Bergman/John Williams—BMI) *Pub.* EMI/United Artists Catalog
- 2. You'd Better Love Me**—Bill Charlap, *piano*; Neil Swainson, *bass*;
Terry Clarke, *drums*; Don Thompson, *vibraphone*
(Hugh Martin/Timothy Gray) *Pub.* Tro Music
- 3. Gypsy In My Soul**—Mike Renzi, *piano*; Marc Johnson, *bass*; Joe La Barbera, *drums*;
Jay Berliner, *rhythm guitar*; Jim Sparito, *percussion*
(Clay Boland/Moe Jaffe) *Pub.* Words and Music Inc./Essex Music Inc.
- 4. I Have Dreamed**—Don Thompson, *piano*; Ed Bickert, *guitar*; Neil Swainson, *bass*;
Terry Clarke, *drums*; *string quartet**
(Richard Rogers Hammerstein/Oscar Hammerstein III) *Pub.* Williamson Music
- 5. You're The Top**—Reg Schwager, *guitar*; Neil Swainson, *bass*; Terry Clark, *drums*;
Don Thompson, *piano*; Rick Wilkens, *tenor sax*
(Cole Porter) *Pub.* Warner-Chappell Music
- 6. The Best Thing For You**—Reg Schwager, *guitar*; Neil Swainson, *bass*;
Terry Clarke, *drums*; Don Thompson, *piano*
(Irving Berlin) *Pub.* Irving Berlin Music
- 7. Whistling Away The Dark**—Ed Bickert, *acoustic guitar*; Tom Szesznak,
accordion; Don Thompson, *piano*; Neil Swainson, *bass*; Terry Clarke, *drums*; *string quartet**
(Henry Mancini/Johnny Mercer) *Pub.* Northridge Music Co./Famous Music
- 8. I've Got You Under My Skin/Easy To Love**—Ed Bickert, *guitar*;
Neil Swainson, *bass*; Terry Clarke, *drums*
(Cole Porter) *Pub.* Warner-Chappell Music
- 9. Falling In Love With Love**—Don Thompson, *vibraphone*; Bill Charlap, *piano*;
Neil Swainson, *bass*; Terry Clarke, *drums*
(Richard Rogers/Lorenz Hart) *Pub.* Warner-Chappell Music
- 10. You Don't Know Me**—Mike Renzi, *piano*;
Marc Johnson, *bass*; Joe La Barbera, *drums*; Peter Bernstein, *guitar*
(Cindy Walker/Eddy Arnold—BMI) *Pub.* Unichappell Music
- 11. Too Close For Comfort**—Don Thompson, *piano/percussion*;
Neil Swainson, *bass*; Terry Clarke, *drums*; Rick Wilkens, *tenor sax*; Reg Schwager, *rhythm guitar*
(Jerry Bock/Larry Holofcener/George David Weiss—BMI) *Pub.* Tommy Valando Music
- 12. Inchworm**—Don Thompson, *piano*; Ed Bickert, *guitar*; Neil Swainson, *bass*; 'cello & viola*
(Frank Loesser) *Pub.* MPL Communications
- 13. Something's Coming**—Bill Charlap, *piano*; Neil Swainson, *bass*;
Terry Clarke, *drums*; *string quartet**
(Leonard Bernstein/Stephen Sondheim) *Pub.* G. Schirmer Music
- 14. Sometimes**—Bill Charlap, *piano*
(Henry Mancini/Felice Mancini) *Pub.* Northridge Music Co.

* **String Quartet**
Adele Armin, *first violin*
Vera Tarnowsky, *second violin*
Terry Helmer, *viola*
Richard Armin, *'cello*

All selections **ASCAP**
except where otherwise noted.

Produced by
Trudy Desmond, except tracks 3 and
10, produced by John Snyder

Executive Producers
Trudy Desmond and Terry Sheard

Associate Producer
Barry Kleinbort

Production Coordinator for KOCH Jazz
Donald Elfman

Musical Arrangements
Don Thompson

Strings on tracks 4, 7, 12 and 13
arranged by Doug Riley

All tracks except 3 and 10 recorded
February 2-4, 1994 at Sounds
Interchange, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Engineered and mixed by Phil Sheridan,
assisted by Steve Gadsen

Tracks 3 and 10 recorded April 22-23,
1993 at Skyline Studios, NYC

Engineered by
Paul Wycliffe assisted by Rich Lamb

Edited and Mastered
May 10-11, 1993 by Jay Newland at
BMG Studios, NYC

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Trudy Desmond

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